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TAGS: [MARR](#) [MCAP](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [PO](#)  
SUBJECT: PORTUGAL INTERESTED IN MISSILE DEFENSE PLANS

REF: LISBON 550

Classified By: POL CHIEF TROY FITRELL, REASONS 1.4 (B,D)

¶1. (C) Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials were grateful to receive the fact sheets developed by EUR/PPD and EUR/PRA on the proposed U.S. missile defense system in conjunction with Poland and the Czech Republic. Security and Disarmament Affairs Deputy Director Pedro Sousa Abreu, who has direct responsibility for non-proliferation and missile issues, told us that the Portuguese share our concerns and that Portugal will convey the right messages to the Russians, including at the European Union ministerial troika meeting in Brussels next week. Sousa Abreu expressed a keen interest in USG plans to engage European allies and partners on the issue.

¶2. (U) Sousa Abreu noted that officials from his embassy in Washington would attend a meeting with their Czech counterparts April 19 to discuss the missile defense system. He appreciated that the proposed system would complement current NATO plans and expressed an interest in how and when ballistic missile defense discussions would be raised within NATO structures. As Portugal assumes the presidency of the European Union in July, Sousa Abreu also asked if the USG intended to approach EU capitals to explain our views.

Comment

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¶3. (C) Portugal has concerns regarding the Middle East and with Russia that match our own, so this issue offers an opportunity for Portugal's quiet diplomacy to be helpful, particularly within European Union structures. Informally, Sousa Abreu suggested that criticism of the proposal by certain EU allies stemmed from other issues, rather than any careful analysis of the proposal itself.  
Hoffman